Lives Lost, Lives Changed

Mark Reis / Gazette Telegraph

HIV-positive inmate Fabous Nobles gives a goodbye hug to Valerie Fogg, whose son died of AIDS in 1992.

BY DEB ACORD / GAZETTE TELEGRAPH

Valerie Fogg, petite and purposeful, marches to the dining hall at the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility in Canon City and pulls open the door.

A shaft of sunlight falls on a nearby table as Fogg peers into the room full of inmates.

"Are you eating your vegetables?" she asks.

A dozen or so men look up from their food, bewildered, and stare at this 57-year-old visitor with carefully coiffed gray hair, snappy blazer and tailored pants.

"It's OK," Fogg says, unperturbed. "I'm supposed to ask that. I'm a mom."

She turns, and with her friends, Phyllis Smith and Rosemary Fall, walks across the concrete yard of the prison.

With their cheery smiles and colorful clothing, they don't notice how out of place they look in this drab, gray place. At this moment, this is where they belong. This is what they are driven to do: offer support, comfort and friendship to HIV-positive inmates who call themselves the "scum of the scum of the earth."

Five years ago, these women wouldn't have dreamed of visiting a medium-security prison filled with murderers, rapists and drug dealers.

But that was before their sons died of AIDS.

AIDS changes the friends and families of those it claims, but none more dramatically than the mothers. The mother-child bond is special, and when mothers lose their children to AIDS, they respond not only to the disease but to the ignorance and fear that surround it.

They grieve, they question, they get angry. They attend political rallies. They become active in support groups. They work to help others with their grief; to make their sons' deaths have some meaning; to make the world a more accepting place.

And to accomplish their goals, they change careers, plans – their lives.

What these women, these mothers, were before their sons had AIDS, they are no more.

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BUSINESS

▶ **CHANGING SITUATION:** Though it may be tough to find an apartment these days, housing market observers are beginning to warn of an apartment glut that could send vacancies soaring and rents dropping within two years./F1

LIFESTYLE

▶ **A PAIN IN THE GRASS:** When you talk about dedicated service organizations, integrity and leadership, you are not talking about the World Famous Lawn Ranger Precision Lawn Mower Drill Team, writes member Dave Barry./G3

TRAVEL

▶ **ON THE ROAD AGAIN:** Charles Kuralt didn't really retire when he left CBS News. Instead, he spent a year revisiting his favorite places and wrote about it in "Charles Kuralt's America."/G12

Almost presidential

Former first lady Lady Bird Johnson smiles as she talks with John Coolidge, son of former President Calvin Coolidge, and John's wife, Florence, during her visit Saturday to Coolidge's summer White House in Plymouth Notch, Vt. The house was designated a national historic site in 1967 during President Lyndon Johnson's administration.

Lotto

SATURDAY NIGHT'S DRAWING:

3	6	19
22	41	42

Keno

SATURDAY NIGHT'S NUMBERS:

3	4	5	12
13	17	18	21
24	25	26	29
30	33	37	44
49	54	58	59

noon. High 76.

warm. High 79, low 44.
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High 73, low 40.
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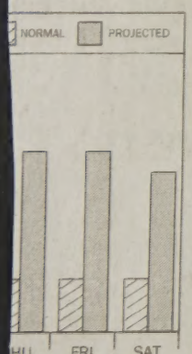
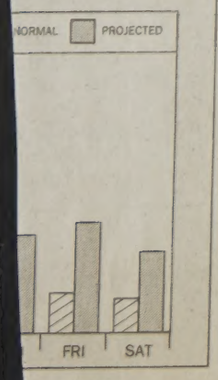


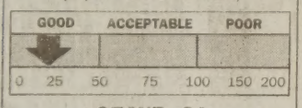


WEATHER

STATISTICS

AIR QUALITY

(3 p.m. SAT. OCT. 14)



OZONE - 34
CARBON MONOXIDE - 9

24-HOUR

Time	Temp.	Wind	Humid.
Friday			
6 p.m.	52	S 8	25
7 p.m.	45	S 8	33
8 p.m.	45	SW 5	35
9 p.m.	45	0	36
10 p.m.	39	E 5	46
11 p.m.	43	0	38
Saturday			
Midn.	35	NE 5	54
1 a.m.	34	E 5	54
2 a.m.	35	NE 7	49
3 a.m.	33	NE 6	53
4 a.m.	33	NE 7	53
5 a.m.	34	NE 8	51
6 a.m.	30	N 6	55
7 a.m.	32	NE 6	63
8 a.m.	38	NE 8	46
9 a.m.	49	W 3	31
10 a.m.	54	0	23
11 a.m.	59	0	19
Noon	63	SW 6	14
1 p.m.	65	SW 6	13
2 p.m.	68	S 7	14
3 p.m.	69	S 10	13
4 p.m.	69	S 13	13
5 p.m.	68	S 10	13

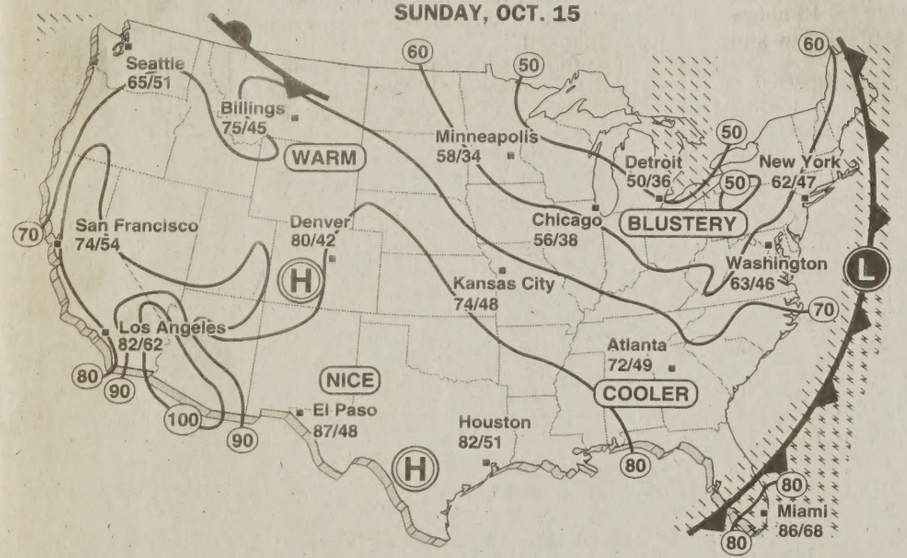
PRECIPITATION

24 hours to 6 p.m. yesterday	0.00"
Total for month to date	0.02"
Normal for month to date	0.42"
Total this year to date	19.84"
Normal for year to date	14.91"

HIGH/LOW (as of 6 p.m.)

High Yesterday	69°
Low Yesterday	30°

TODAY'S ACCU WEATHER® FORECAST
SUNDAY, OCT. 15



Showers
T-storms
Rain
Flurries
Snow
Ice

Fronts
Cold
Warm
Stationary

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature lines are highs for the day. Forecast high/low temperatures are given for selected cities.
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NATION

City	Yest.	Today	Mon.	Tues.
Albany, NY	71 53 r	58 41 pc	57 32 pc	55 39 pc
Albq., NM	72 42 s	81 47 s	81 47 s	80 44 s
Amarillo, TX	73 37 s	85 50 s	88 47 s	79 44 s
Anchorage, AK	40 24 c	40 26 c	41 30 pc	46 31 pc
Asheville, NC	67 62 r	68 38 s	71 37 s	67 42 s
Atlanta, GA	69 68 r	72 49 s	76 48 s	71 52 s
Atl. City, NJ	77 61 pc	63 41 pc	64 34 s	59 41 s
Austin, TX	80 61 s	84 53 s	84 56 s	81 58 s
Baltimore, MD	78 65 r	64 41 pc	65 37 s	63 44 s
Bangor, ME	75 44 pc	67 40 sh	52 31 pc	49 36 pc
Billings, MT	56 41 s	75 45 pc	71 42 pc	59 35 pc
Birmingham, AL	68 61 r	76 43 s	82 45 s	73 50 s
Bismarck, ND	53 28 pc	64 35 pc	71 38 s	60 29 pc
Boise, ID	70 38 s	78 46 s	71 37 pc	61 38 pc
Boston, MA	77 57 sh	65 45 sh	59 42 s	57 46 s
Brownsville, TX	77 73 pc	82 60 s	85 60 s	82 64 s
Buffalo, NY	67 57 r	51 41 sh	53 39 pc	56 48 pc
Burlington, VT	70 50 sh	56 43 sh	50 35 sh	49 38 pc
Casper, WY	70 29 s	77 43 s	73 41 s	64 34 pc
Cedar City, UT	71 29 s	79 41 s	79 41 s	72 38 s

LEGEND: s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

City	Yest.	Today	Mon.	Tues.
Jackson, MS	82 64 sh	82 44 s	87 45 s	71 51 s
Jacksonville, FL	88 72 pc	78 48 pc	80 51 s	72 60 pc
Kansas City, MO	64 42 s	74 48 s	81 54 s	73 48 s
Las Vegas, NV	85 52 s	90 59 s	90 59 s	85 55 s
Little Rock, AR	72 53 pc	82 54 s	82 46 s	76 47 s
Los Angeles, CA	81 64 s	82 62 pc	82 62 pc	81 58 pc
Louisville, KY	69 54 c	60 41 pc	70 49 s	72 49 s
Marquette, MI	51 43 sh	46 30 sf	48 36 s	55 38 pc
Memphis, TN	82 59 pc	79 51 s	84 51 s	75 53 s
Miami, FL	86 76 sh	86 68 r	84 73 sh	84 76 pc
Milwaukee, WI	82 47 c	55 39 s	61 47 s	66 47 pc
Minneapolis, MN	73 41 c	58 34 s	63 45 s	64 38 pc
Mobile, AL	73 67 r	82 49 pc	84 50 s	71 58 s
Nashville, TN	73 57 sh	74 44 s	79 47 s	72 50 s
New Orleans, LA	85 70 pc	83 56 pc	84 53 s	73 58 s
New York, NY	74 65 sh	62 47 pc	58 44 s	58 51 s

City	Yest.	Today	Mon.	Tues.
Sioux Falls, SD	65 36 s	66 40 s	72 44 s	67 36 s
Spokane, WA	67 34 pc	66 47 pc	62 36 pc	52 34 pc
Tampa, FL	86 75 pc	79 55 c	83 63 s	81 67 pc
Topeka, KS	68 42 s	76 46 s	83 53 s	74 47 s
Tucson, AZ	97 62 s	98 61 s	97 55 s	93 58 s
Tulsa, OK	73 44 s	84 53 s	85 54 s	79 52 s
Washington, DC	78 68 sh	63 46 pc	63 42 s	64 48 s
Wichita, KS	71 37 s	82 52 s	83 52 s	76 46 s
Wilmington, DE	77 61 r	61 42 pc	61 37 s	62 44 s

CANADA

City	Yest.	Today	Mon.	Tues.
Calgary, Alb.	55 33 pc	61 46 r	59 23 sh	42 20 pc
Edmonton, Alb.	48 36 sh	53 36 c	56 30 pc	66 36 pc
Montreal, Que.	70 50 r	50 42 sh	52 42 pc	48 42 pc
Ottawa, Ont.	65 48 sh	54 39 sh	54 30 pc	46 30 pc
Toronto, Ont.	65 57 r	52 38 sh	53 30 pc	55 36 pc
Vancouver, B.C.	59 49 pc	60 43 t	58 43 pc	58 42

MOTHERS & SONS

Lives Lost, Lives Changed

CONTINUED FROM A1

Valerie Fogg

"When Kevin was little and in the hospital so much, I would read 'Winnie the Pooh' to him. He loved Piglet. And when he was so sick near the end, I couldn't think of anything else to do." So she willed herself to return to the beginning, and sat and read the children's book to her son, who by then weighed as much as a child – 70 pounds.

Kevin Richardson

B.J. Welch

"I remember Timm, my youngest son, saying 'AIDS is the best thing that ever happened to me. It turned me inward.' "

Timm Swink

Ted Swink

Valerie Fogg

Valerie Fogg had a ticket to the leisurely life of retirement. She'd quit a job at The Broadmoor and made plans to do some volunteer work, visit with friends, travel.

Then, in September 1992, her only son, Kevin Richardson, died of AIDS, and those plans died with him.

But his death sent her life spinning in a new direction, with one simple philosophy:

"Be a helper and scream loudly."

So she has devoted her retirement years to helping people with AIDS, and her determination has become her trademark.

"Val tries to come in the front door, but if that doesn't work, she goes around to the back door," says Karen Baker, client services coordinator at the Southern Colorado AIDS Project (S-CAP).

Fogg had known adversity long before Kevin's death. She grew up in London with the bombing and destruction of World War II. Years later, in the United States, her husband left her and their three children after 25 years of marriage.

But she prevailed. She worked her way into a management job at The Broadmoor hotel. She remarried.

But nothing could prepare her for the heartbreak of watching AIDS slowly destroy her son, a fighter from the beginning.

Born prematurely, he had heart and stomach problems and was always small for his age. But he eventually found something he could do well — first gymnastics, then ice skating. He became known for his bravado at combining his gymnastic and skating talents, and even taught a fellow skater — Scott Hamilton — to do aerial backflips on the ice.

"He was a daredevil. He was a fighter before, during, over and over throughout his life, and at the end of his life. He loved speed, thrill, adventure. He had a spirit. He loved to shock me and frighten me to death," Fogg says.

So when Kevin told her when he was 16 that he was gay, Fogg tried not to act surprised. "I thought, at least my biggest fear wouldn't be realized — there would never be a father coming over saying 'your son has gotten my daughter pregnant.' "

In 1985, while Kevin was living in California, he learned he was HIV-positive, and though he aggressively battled it, the virus won. When Kevin died in 1992, two days after his 28th birthday, Fogg grieved. But with her grief, she also felt a burning anger. "I thought, 'Dammit, young people shouldn't have to cope with seeing their friends dying.' And I knew there would never be a cure for AIDS until a lot of people got angry."

So she got to work. Two weeks after her son died, she saw a notice in the paper for a workshop to make panels for the AIDS Memorial Quilt, a giant hand-stitched memorial to those who have died of AIDS.

"I knew I could sew. Maybe I could do that."

She signed up for courses that would teach her more about AIDS and began asking herself how she could do more. Knowing how backbreakingly hard it can be to care for someone with AIDS, she started a respite program at S-CAP. The program matches volunteers with people who have AIDS, so their caregivers can have a chance to rest or get away for a while.

She visits people at the Pikes Peak Hospice, and speaks out on AIDS to church and business groups — anyone who asks her. She became a member of the S-CAP board of directors.

"We have to fight AIDS in every area," she says. "And we have to support people who have AIDS."

Her volunteer work with AIDS has become all-consuming, "almost like having a full-time job," she says, but she believes the hell she went through has made her a better person.

"AIDS educates you, and helps you forget about material things in life — you can wait to put up your curtains, but people can't wait."

The cruelest disease of all

Most mothers whose children die — because of accidents, disease, crime — will be changed by the loss. But mothers whose children die of AIDS are changed in even more dramatic ways, says Karen Baker at S-CAP.

Part of the reason is that AIDS is a capricious, fatal disease that takes its time with its victims and relatives, toying with their hope, then plunging them into despair.

"It's not like losing a child to cancer," Fogg says. "With AIDS, your child may die of two or three diseases at one time."

And then there's the tie to homosexuality. Though AIDS claims women, children, and heterosexual men, it still takes disproportionate aim at gay men. In Colorado, 72 percent of people with AIDS are homosexual or bisexual men.

The mothers and their sons, already devastated by AIDS, have the added burden of dealing with public attitudes toward homosexuality.

"The social stigma of HIV and AIDS is so great. Often there is no one to disclose it to; they are looking at the real possibility of rejection," Baker says.

So the mothers look to each other for support and relief from the loneliness, disapproval, alienation, fear and disgust that their sons and families face.

In November 1992, Rosemary Fall started the moms group, a support group for women whose loved ones have AIDS; out of it sprang other projects, including the prison visits.

Its members are mostly mothers: a mom whose heterosexual son contracted AIDS through a blood transfusion; a mom who adopted a baby later found to be HIV-positive.

But most have gay sons, and the support group has given them hope, kinship and the encouragement to pursue new directions in life.

The moms have found strength as a group "because they can talk about the toxicity their sons felt, that they felt themselves, that they feel now," Baker says. "I know of no other group that is so dedicated to its mission."

A place to vent, a place to unite

Sunlight streams through a window at a Saturday morning meeting of the moms group in a Colorado Springs home, but inside, the air is chilled by words.

The moms are trying to come to grips with the actions of Denver cable TV talk-show host Bob Enyart. On one telecast, Enyart held up the newspaper obituary of a man he suspected had died of AIDS. Across the obit, he'd scrawled the word "sodomite."

It wasn't Enyart's first obit-reading, but the moms were determined it would be the last.

"We should write letters to him. Maybe he just doesn't understand," one mom says softly.

"No, he doesn't want to understand. We should hire a lawyer and take legal action against him so he is stopped. Or send money to the lawyer of the man's partner," argues another.

They argue and talk. Tears come to their eyes. And then one of the group's quietest members, a small woman sitting with her hands laced tightly in her lap says, "I could kill him."

In the end, they decide to leave the issue alone.

"We do what we can do," says B.J. Welch, a member of the group. "People are going to have their opinions and their beliefs. Writing a letter or calling a lawyer isn't going to change this man — anyone. We have to change, and people around us will change. It takes love."

Carole Laxton

Carole Laxton knew the sting of disapproval: She had divorced her first husband in the 1960s, when divorce was still taboo, and many of her friends thought it was "just horrible."

"So I could deal with people looking down on me," she says.

But when her middle son, Michael McCall, died of AIDS in June 1993 at the age of 35, she took the comments of anti-gay activists personally — even though they weren't directed squarely at her son.

"I know now what it feels like to be Daniel in the lion's den," she says.

Laxton, 60, is a mother of five — three sons and two daughters. A woman with a pouf of silver-blonde hair and a self-deprecating wit, she never had much time or the desire to "stir things up."

She was too busy raising her children, and spent her sparse free time making things — quilts, flower arrangements, wreaths — and selling them at craft shows. Every Thursday for the past 20 years, she would pick up her mother so they could get their hair done by their favorite stylist, then go to lunch. Hardly the agenda of an activist.

Then Michael told her he had AIDS. She had known he was gay since he was a teen-ager, and had accepted that. But the news about AIDS devastated her.

"When he called me on the phone and told me, I talked to him for about an hour. Then I got off the phone, and cried for three straight days.

"I knew I would have to learn about the disease, but I knew I didn't have to learn to love him."

But she did have to learn how to hold up under the public judgments that constantly wounded her. Though people didn't directly aim comments at her son, she would fill with a stomach-churning sadness when she'd turn on the TV or open a newspaper and be faced with "out-and-out hatred (by others) of people like Michael."

Finally, she could take no more. Earlier this year, the Colorado Springs-based anti-gay rights group that was the force behind Amendment 2 placed a half-page newspaper ad that read: 'Colorado for Family Values Invites You to Hear Some Facts The Homosexual Lobby Hopes You Never Hear. . . . Because . . . we've heard the trashers of traditional values.'

Laxton sat down and wrote a letter to the moms group. "It is time for mothers of gay men to stand up and educate these insignificant, self-centered, self-appointed judges."

Those were strong words for Laxton, and they moved the mothers to attend that Colorado for Family Values meeting.

But she says she wasn't surprised at the depth of her anger, because she's a different person than she was before she nursed Michael through AIDS.

"Before, my family and my closest friends would have sworn I would totally fall apart when I learned Michael had AIDS. But I didn't."

She doesn't think much about how her life would be if AIDS hadn't intruded, but she remembers that before the disease, "life was great."

"I had a lot of beautiful kids, stepkids, grandchildren. We never had anything major happen."

But now, looking back, Laxton says, "I also realize my life had little value. Now there is value. I've learned there's something out there to fight for. I've learned we have to educate people, about AIDS, about homosexuality, about the grace and dignity these young men show. They all seem to have this God-given gift of acceptance. They aren't afraid to die. They're just sorry they had to do it so soon."

Mothers fight grief with action

When a mother has to come to grips with an AIDS-infected child, when she is faced with the disease killing her son, nibbling at bone and muscle until he disappears and is replaced by an old man, she feels anger, sadness and guilt, says Barb Elstun.

Elstun is a social worker and manager of inpatient facilities at Pikes Peak Hospice, where she counsels people as they grieve.

"Moms have expectations for their children. Finding out your son is gay is the first loss. Then you find out they have HIV, and know what that is, and you have to go through that fight with them."

"That grief process often takes moms back to when the child was born. They ask themselves, 'what did I do wrong' . . . and 'what could I have done?'

"Society places so much of a burden on them: 'how could you let your child come out' . . . 'how could you let your child have AIDS?' "

So mothers — and fathers — grieve while they grapple with their guilt. But men and women handle their grief in different ways, Elstun says.

"Men tend to work harder in their grief, get more involved in their activities. Women are drawn to each other in their grief. They are more emotional. They want to talk about it."

So women join groups. They get involved and actively look for outlets for their grief.

Photos by Mark Reis / Gazette Telegraph

Carrying carefully wrapped plates of food, Rosemary Fall, left, and Phyllis Smith, right, enter the front gates of the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility in Canon City, with a representative from the Southern Colorado AIDS Project.

Inmate Hector Ortega talks with Rosemary Fall after one of the support group meetings attended by HIV-positive inmates at the medium-security prison.

Members of the moms group leave the Territorial gates after one of their monthly visits with inmates who are HIV-positive.

Phyllis Smith hugs inmate Corey Wallace during a prison visit. The moms were given a tour of the facility, and were shown Wallace's cell.

B.J. Welch

B.J. Welch believes she has no choice but to get involved. After losing two gay sons to AIDS, she can't sit still.

"There's a stigma attached to AIDS that no other illness has," she says. "They say 'What did you do to lose a child to AIDS?' 'What did you do to have a gay son . . . two gay sons?' "

But Welch, 61, has survived the questions and the criticism. She survived the end of her first marriage when her husband left suddenly after 25 years; survived the death of her youngest son, Timm Swink, to AIDS in 1992 at the age of 29; survived the coming-out of her married oldest son, Ted Swink, that same year, and later, when he told her he, too, had AIDS; and survived when Ted, a successful entertainer, died in 1994 at the age of 39. She survived, and emerged with a mission and a newfound strength.

"I'm a completely different person since AIDS came into my life. I appreciate every day on this planet."

Since the 1960s, Welch has counseled people — drug addicts at a California methadone clinic, people arrested for drunken driving — so perhaps it wasn't much of a reach for her to decide to turn the loss of her sons into a way to help others.

When Ted was sick, he made a request of his mother.

"He said 'Mom, you've got the touch,' " Welch remembers. " 'You have to do massage. Nobody wants to touch people with AIDS. They need to be touched.' "

So after Ted died, Welch enrolled in the Colorado Institute of Massage Therapy. She graduated Oct. 7, and will devote her time to neuromuscular massage therapy, especially for people with AIDS. Already she's known as "our lady of touch" at S-CAP; it's a title of which she's particularly proud.

She has been asked before how her life would be different without the stain of AIDS. "I would probably still be volunteering, but also retired, sitting home doing my needlework and reading my novels; doing some traveling."

But that will never happen, and Welch believes her sons' deaths weren't in vain. "We learn lessons from the things in our life. I learned not to be so judgmental of differences. People have asked if I could change everything and have your sons back, if I would. I would say no. This is the way it is supposed to be."

Phyllis Smith

At the monthly meetings with the inmates in Canon City, Phyllis Smith is the mom who wants to take all "the boys" home. She's the mom whose heart broke after she found out that one of her favorites, a solemn inmate who calls himself Socrates, was rejected by his family when he was about to be paroled. She's the mom who asked if she could legally adopt him.

She says her heart breaks for Socrates; it is a feeling she might not have had before AIDS came into her life.

"There was a part of me in my younger years that was more critical and stern about a few things," says Smith, whose son Glen died of AIDS in 1993 at the age of 32. "I'm just not like that anymore. My life was safe . . . there weren't any real disasters or grief. We felt like nothing was going to happen to us."

But it did, and now Smith finds herself in the prison, helping out at potlucks at S-CAP, and working as a respite caregiver.

It's the prison program that has most affected her. "Somebody's got to be there for those guys. I know Glen would have wanted me to go."

Glen, who died 11 months after the death of his partner, Tom, knew what it was like to be rejected, Smith says.

"Glen had a hard time growing up. He was called 'faggot,' 'queer.' He said one time, 'Mom, do you think I chose to be like this?' "

The Smith family — Phyllis and husband Harold, and Glen and his two sisters, were always close, but Phyllis remembers Glen "just couldn't find peace."

For the year and a half before Glenn died, Smith and a home nursing assistant took care of him in her small, tidy home. "Those were lonely, isolated years."

Perhaps because of the isolation she felt then, or perhaps because of the isolation she has felt since then as she has cared for her invalid 95-year-old mother in her home, Smith volunteered immediately for the prison program when it was mentioned at a moms group meeting.

"I can't do as much as I want because of Mom, but I thought I could do this," she says.

Smith's days are vastly different from how she thought they would be.

"We were looking forward to an easy retirement. We wanted to travel, see our other kids. Now, I see myself working for the rest of my life with people whose lives have been affected by AIDS. It's a thing that has enveloped our lives. We can't leave it alone."

Rosemary Fall

Rosemary Fall, 68, a pale, quiet woman with sparkling eyes, started the moms support group so other mothers wouldn't feel the isolation and the hopelessness she knew so well.

"At one of the first meetings, one of the moms came up to me and said I was the first mother who had lost a child to AIDS she had ever known. She didn't have to be alone anymore."

Fall came into her role as the unofficial leader of the group as a part of her own healing.

Until Bill, one of four sons, told Fall and her husband, Gerald, he had AIDS in 1988, she had looked forward to retirement. She and her husband had always worked, and she was excited about the prospect of more leisure time. "I have always been a family person. I thought we could spend more time with our kids, and I would play a lot of golf and go fishing."

But "the golden years turned sour," Fall says, and when Bill died of AIDS in 1988, her life changed forever.

Bill was the Falls' youngest son, and he had always been special to Rosemary.

"When he was little, there was a bakery a block from our house. We didn't ever have any money, but every once in a while, I would scrounge up a little change, and Bill would walk to the bakery and bring home a couple of doughnuts. We would sit, just the two of us, and have our bakery and talk."

When he was in college, he told his parents he was gay.

"It was a real shock to us. We all had a hard time, especially Bill."

He was diagnosed HIV-positive in 1987, and Fall was worried about more than the disease.

"I knew that his medicine would cost $1,000 a month and I didn't know what we would do. That's when I found S-CAP, and began volunteering.

"I knew I could share what I had learned about AIDS. And, even though it's not just a gay disease, I knew there were many families out there who had to deal with their children's homosexuality as well as their having AIDS. I thought I could help."

And she has helped, with the moms group and regular potluck meals at S-CAP; delivering meals and helping with transportation, loyally attending Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meetings, and being one of the prison moms.

In 1993, she was one of 10 people in the country recognized for their outstanding work in the fight against AIDS by the World AIDS Day Committee.

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Fall knows how it feels to fight a deadly disease. Seventeen years ago, she fought breast cancer, and won.

But helping her son fight AIDS also changed her physically as well as mentally. "It's almost like my immune system is shot, too. I don't know if it's because of the stress or what," she says, her voice breaking as she tells of having four surgeries since her son died. Now, the breast cancer is back, but she is fighting it with chemotherapy, radiation and a strong will.

Through her bouts of illness, through her grieving for her son, Fall has learned what she calls the most important lesson. "The important things are to love and be loved. What a great world this would be if everyone would help each other. It seems so simple."

A friend in prison

On this day at the prison, the moms are excited — they have been given permission to visit the cell of one of the inmates they had gotten to know at the HIV support-group meetings.

Fall, Smith and Fogg are escorted to the cell of Corey Wallace, who waits for them at the door.

Wallace, a baby-faced inmate who has been in prison most of his adult life for interstate car theft, has spent the morning cleaning in anticipation of their visit. As they arrive, he steps out of the immaculate 5-by-7-foot concrete space, and one by one, the moms walk in.

They look around carefully, seriously; the tips of their fingers gliding over the surfaces of bookcase and desk.

Outside, on the narrow walkway, the three women in turn give Wallace a prolonged hug. "We enjoy you ladies," he says. "We don't have a lot to look forward to."

He grins. "When we get out, can we come to your house and have cookies and stuff?"

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Then Smith says softly, "When you see someone die of AIDS, you don't forget. We won't forget. You can come over any time."

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Carole Laxton

"AIDS is like a big black door. Behind that door, there's a mother, a brother, a sister. Sometime in everyone's lives, they're going to have to open that door and find AIDS."

Michael McCall

Rosemary Fall

"Because of AIDS, this is a world of sadness. I would not have chosen to spend my golden years in this world."

Bill Fall

Phyllis Smith

At the moms group, she is asked continually by another mom why she thinks their sons died of AIDS. "I tell her it's because we can handle it."

Glen Smith

MOTHERS & SONS

Lives Lost, Lives Changed

CONTINUED FROM A1

Valerie Fogg

"When Kevin was little and in the hospital so much, I would read 'Winnie the Pooh' to him. He loved Piglet. And when he was so sick near the end, I couldn't think of anything else to do." So she willed herself to return to the beginning, and sat and read the children's book to her son, who by then weighed as much as a child – 70 pounds.

Kevin Richardson

B.J. Welch

"I remember Timm, my youngest son, saying 'AIDS is the best thing that ever happened to me. It turned me inward.' "

Timm Swink

Ted Swink

Valerie Fogg

Valerie Fogg had a ticket to the leisurely life of retirement. She'd quit a job at The Broadmoor and made plans to do some volunteer work, visit with friends, travel.

Then, in September 1992, her only son, Kevin Richardson, died of AIDS, and those plans died with him.

But his death sent her life spinning in a new direction, with one simple philosophy:

"Be a helper and scream loudly."

So she has devoted her retirement years to helping people with AIDS, and her determination has become her trademark.

"Val tries to come in the front door, but if that doesn't work, she goes around to the back door," says Karen Baker, client services coordinator at the Southern Colorado AIDS Project (S-CAP).

Fogg had known adversity long before Kevin's death. She grew up in London with the bombing and destruction of World War II. Years later, in the United States, her husband left her and their three children after 25 years of marriage.

But she prevailed. She worked her way into a management job at The Broadmoor hotel. She remarried.

But nothing could prepare her for the heartbreak of watching AIDS slowly destroy her son, a fighter from the beginning.

Born prematurely, he had heart and stomach problems and was always small for his age. But he eventually found something he could do well — first gymnastics, then ice skating. He became known for his bravado at combining his gymnastic and skating talents, and even taught a fellow skater — Scott Hamilton — to do aerial backflips on the ice.

"He was a daredevil. He was a fighter before, during, over and over throughout his life, and at the end of his life. He loved speed, thrill, adventure. He had a spirit. He loved to shock me and frighten me to death," Fogg says.

So when Kevin told her when he was 16 that he was gay, Fogg tried not to act surprised. "I thought, at least my biggest fear wouldn't be realized — there would never be a father coming over saying 'your son has gotten my daughter pregnant.' "

In 1985, while Kevin was living in California, he learned he was HIV-positive, and though he aggressively battled it, the virus won. When Kevin died in 1992, two days after his 28th birthday, Fogg grieved. But with her grief, she also felt a burning anger. "I thought, 'Dammit, young people shouldn't have to cope with seeing their friends dying.' And I knew there would never be a cure for AIDS until a lot of people got angry."

So she got to work. Two weeks after her son died, she saw a notice in the paper for a workshop to make panels for the AIDS Memorial Quilt, a giant hand-stitched memorial to those who have died of AIDS.

"I knew I could sew. Maybe I could do that."

She signed up for courses that would teach her more about AIDS and began asking herself how she could do more. Knowing how backbreakingly hard it can be to care for someone with AIDS, she started a respite program at S-CAP. The program matches volunteers with people who have AIDS, so their caregivers can have a chance to rest or get away for a while.

She visits people at the Pikes Peak Hospice, and speaks out on AIDS to church and business groups — anyone who asks her. She became a member of the S-CAP board of directors.

"We have to fight AIDS in every area," she says. "And we have to support people who have AIDS."

Her volunteer work with AIDS has become all-consuming, "almost like having a full-time job," she says, but she believes the hell she went through has made her a better person.

"AIDS educates you, and helps you think about others," she says. "You forget about material things in life — you can wait to put up your curtains, but people can't wait."

The cruelest disease of all

Most mothers whose children die — because of accidents, disease, crime — will be changed by the loss. But mothers whose children die of AIDS are changed in even more dramatic ways, says Karen Baker at S-CAP.

Part of the reason is that AIDS is a capricious, fatal disease that takes its time with its victims and relatives, toying with their hope, then plunging them into despair.

"It's not like losing a child to cancer," Fogg says. "With AIDS, your child may die of two or three diseases at one time."

And then there's the tie to homosexuality. Though AIDS claims women, children, and heterosexual men, it still takes disproportionate aim at gay men. In Colorado, 72 percent of people with AIDS are homosexual or bisexual men.

The mothers and their sons, already devastated by AIDS, have the added burden of dealing with public attitudes toward homosexuality.

"The social stigma of HIV and AIDS is so great. Often there is no one to disclose it to; they are looking at the real possibility of rejection," Baker says.

So the mothers look to each other for support and relief from the loneliness, disapproval, alienation, fear and disgust that their sons and families face.

In November 1992, Rosemary Fall started the moms group, a support group for women whose loved ones have AIDS; out of it sprang other projects, including the prison visits.

Its members are mostly mothers: a mom whose heterosexual son contracted AIDS through a blood transfusion; a mom who adopted a baby later found to be HIV-positive.

But most have gay sons, and the support group has given them hope, kinship and the encouragement to pursue new directions in life.

The moms have found strength as a group "because they can talk about the toxicity their sons felt, that they felt themselves, that they feel now," Baker says. "I know of no other group that is so dedicated to its mission."

A place to vent, a place to unite

Sunlight streams through a window at a Saturday morning meeting of the moms group in a Colorado Springs home, but inside, the air is chilled by words.

The moms are trying to come to grips with the actions of Denver cable TV talk-show host Bob Enyart. On one telecast, Enyart held up the newspaper obituary of a man he suspected had died of AIDS. Across the obit, he'd scrawled the word "sodomite."

It wasn't Enyart's first obit-reading, but the moms were determined it would be the last.

"We should write letters to him. Maybe he just doesn't understand," one mom says softly.

"No, he doesn't want to understand. We should hire a lawyer and take legal action against him so he is stopped. Or send money to the lawyer of the man's partner," argues another.

They argue and talk. Tears come to their eyes. And then one of the group's quietest members, a small woman sitting with her hands laced tightly in her lap says, "I could kill him."

In the end, they decide to leave the issue alone.

"We do what we can do," says B.J. Welch, a member of the group. "People are going to have their opinions and their beliefs. Writing a letter or calling a lawyer isn't going to change this man — anyone. We have to change, and people around us will change. It takes love."

Carole Laxton

Carole Laxton knew the sting of disapproval: She had divorced her first husband in the 1960s, when divorce was still taboo, and many of her friends thought it was "just horrible."

"So I could deal with people looking down on me," she says.

But when her middle son, Michael McCall, died of AIDS in June 1993 at the age of 35, she took the comments of anti-gay activists personally — even though they weren't directed squarely at her son.

"I know now what it feels like to be Daniel in the lion's den," she says.

Laxton, 60, is a mother of five — three sons and two daughters. A woman with a pouf of silver-blonde hair and a self-deprecating wit, she never had much time or the desire to "stir things up."

She was too busy raising her children, and spent her sparse free time making things — quilts, flower arrangements, wreaths — and selling them at craft shows. Every Thursday for the past 20 years, she would pick up her mother so they could get their hair done by their favorite stylist, then go to lunch. Hardly the agenda of an activist.

Then Michael told her he had AIDS. She had known he was gay since he was a teen-ager, and had accepted that. But the news about AIDS devastated her.

"When he called me on the phone and told me, I talked to him for about an hour. Then I got off the phone, and cried for three straight days.

"I knew I would have to learn about the disease, but I knew I didn't have to learn to love him."

But she did have to learn how to hold up under the public judgments that constantly wounded her. Though people didn't directly aim comments at her son, she would fill with a stomach-churning sadness when she'd turn on the TV or open a newspaper and be faced with "out-and-out hatred (by others) of people like Michael."

Finally, she could take no more. Earlier this year, the Colorado Springs-based anti-gay rights group that was the force behind Amendment 2 placed a half-page newspaper ad that read: 'Colorado for Family Values Invites You to Hear Some Facts The Homosexual Lobby Hopes You Never Hear. . . . Because . . . we've heard the trashers of traditional values."

Laxton sat down and wrote a letter to the moms group. "It is time for mothers of gay men to stand up and educate these insignificant, self-centered, self-appointed judges."

Those were strong words for Laxton, and they moved the mothers to attend that Colorado for Family Values meeting.

But she says she wasn't surprised at the depth of her anger, because she's a different person than she was before she nursed Michael through AIDS.

"Before, my family and my closest friends would have sworn I would totally fall apart when I learned Michael had AIDS. But I didn't."

She doesn't think much about how her life would be if AIDS hadn't intruded, but she remembers that before the disease, "life was great."

"I had a lot of beautiful kids, stepkids, grandchildren. We never had anything major happen."

But now, looking back, Laxton says, "I also realize my life had little value. Now there is value. I've learned there's something out there to fight for. I've learned we have to educate people, about AIDS, about homosexuality, about the grace and dignity these young men show. They all seem to have this God-given gift of acceptance. They aren't afraid to die. They're just sorry they had to do it so soon."

Mothers fight grief with action

When a mother has to come to grips with an AIDS-infected child, when she is faced with the disease killing her son, nibbling at bone and muscle until he disappears and is replaced by an old man, she feels anger, sadness and guilt, says Barb Elstun.

Elstun is a social worker and manager of inpatient facilities at Pikes Peak Hospice, where she counsels people as they grieve.

"Moms have expectations for their children. Finding out your son is gay is the first loss. Then you find out they have HIV, and know what that is, and you have to go through that fight with them."

"That grief process often takes moms back to when the child was born. They ask themselves, 'what did I do wrong' . . . and 'what could I have done?'

"Society places so much of a burden on them: 'how could you let your child come out' . . . 'how could you let your child have AIDS?' "

So mothers — and fathers — grieve while they grapple with their guilt. But men and women handle their grief in different ways, Elstun says.

"Men tend to work harder in their grief, get more involved in their activities. Women are drawn to each other in their grief. They are more emotional. They want to talk about it."

So women join groups. They get involved and actively look for outlets for their grief.

Photos by Mark Reis / Gazette Telegraph

Carrying carefully wrapped plates of food, Rosemary Fall, left, and Phyllis Smith, right, enter the front gates of the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility in Canon City, with a representative from the Southern Colorado AIDS Project.

Inmate Hector Ortega talks with Rosemary Fall after one of the support group meetings attended by HIV-positive inmates at the medium-security prison.

Members of the moms group leave the Territorial gates after one of their monthly visits with inmates who are HIV-positive.

Phyllis Smith hugs inmate Corey Wallace during a prison visit. The moms were given a tour of the facility, and were shown Wallace's cell.

B.J. Welch

B.J. Welch believes she has no choice but to get involved. After losing two gay sons to AIDS, she can't sit still.

"There's a stigma attached to AIDS that no other illness has," she says. "They say, 'What did you do to lose a child to AIDS?' 'What did you do to have a gay son . . . two gay sons?' "

But Welch, 61, has survived the questions and the criticism. She survived the end of her first marriage when her husband left suddenly after 25 years; survived the death of her youngest son, Timm Swink, to AIDS in 1992 at the age of 29; survived the coming-out of her married oldest son, Ted Swink, that same year, and later, when he told her he, too, had AIDS; and survived when Ted, a successful entertainer, died in 1994 at the age of 39. She survived, and emerged with a mission and a newfound strength.

"I'm a completely different person since AIDS came into my life. I appreciate every day on this planet."

Since the 1960s, Welch has counseled people — drug addicts at a California methadone clinic, people arrested for drunken driving — so perhaps it wasn't much of a reach for her to decide to turn the loss of her sons into a way to help others.

When Ted was sick, he made a request of his mother.

"He said 'Mom, you've got the touch,' " Welch remembers. " 'You have to do massage. Nobody wants to touch people with AIDS. They need to be touched.' "

So after Ted died, Welch enrolled in the Colorado Institute of Massage Therapy. She graduated Oct. 7, and will devote her time to neuromuscular massage therapy, especially for people with AIDS. Already she's known as "our lady of touch" at S-CAP; it's a title of which she's particularly proud.

She has been asked before how her life would be different without the stain of AIDS. "I would probably still be volunteering, but also retired, sitting home doing my needlework and reading my novels; doing some traveling."

But that will never happen, and Welch believes her sons' deaths weren't in vain. "We learn lessons from the things in our life. I learned not to be so judgmental of differences. People have asked if I could change everything and have your sons back, if I would. I would say no. This is the way it is supposed to be."

Phyllis Smith

At the monthly meetings with the inmates in Canon City, Phyllis Smith is the mom who wants to take all "the boys" home. She's the mom whose heart broke after she found out that one of her favorites, a solemn inmate who calls himself Socrates, was rejected by his family when he was about to be paroled. She's the mom who asked if she could legally adopt him.

She says her heart breaks for Socrates; it is a feeling she might not have had before AIDS came into her life.

"There was a part of me in my younger years that was more critical and stern about a few things," says Smith, whose son Glen died of AIDS in 1993 at the age of 32. "I'm just not like that anymore. My life was safe . . . there weren't any real disasters or grief. We felt like nothing was going to happen to us."

But it did, and now Smith finds herself in the prison, helping out at potlucks at S-CAP, and working as a respite caregiver.

It's the prison program that has most affected her. "Somebody's got to be there for those guys. I know Glen would have wanted me to go."

Glen, who died 11 months after the death of his partner, Tom, knew what it was like to be rejected, Smith says.

"Glen had a hard time growing up. He was called 'faggot,' 'queer.' He said one time, 'Mom, do you think I chose to be like this?' "

The Smith family — Phyllis and husband Harold, and Glen and his two sisters, were always close, but Phyllis remembers Glen "just couldn't find peace."

For the year and a half before Glenn died, Smith and a home nursing assistant took care of him in her small, tidy home. "Those were lonely, isolated years."

Perhaps because of the isolation she felt then, or perhaps because of the isolation she has felt since then as she has cared for her invalid 95-year-old mother in her home, Smith volunteered immediately for the prison program when it was mentioned at a moms group meeting.

"I can't do as much as I want because of Mom, but I thought I could do this," she says.

Smith's days are vastly different from how she thought they would be.

"We were looking forward to an easy retirement. We wanted to travel, see our other kids. Now, I see myself working for the rest of my life with people whose lives have been affected by AIDS. It's a thing that has enveloped our lives. We can't leave it alone."

Rosemary Fall

Rosemary Fall, 68, a pale, quiet woman with sparkling eyes, started the moms support group so other mothers wouldn't feel the isolation and the hopelessness she knew so well.

"At one of the first meetings, one of the moms came up to me and said I was the first mother who had lost a child to AIDS she had ever known. She didn't have to be alone anymore."

Fall came into her role as the unofficial leader of the group as a part of her own healing.

Until Bill, one of four sons, told Fall and her husband, Gerald, he had AIDS in 1988, she had looked forward to retirement. She and her husband had always worked, and she was excited about the prospect of more leisure time. "I have always been a family person. I thought we could spend more time with our kids, and I would play a lot of golf and go fishing."

But "the golden years turned sour," Fall says, and when Bill died of AIDS in 1988, her life changed forever.

Bill was the Falls' youngest son, and he had always been special to Rosemary.

"When he was little, there was a bakery a block from our house. We didn't ever have any money, but every once in a while, I would scrounge up a little change, and Bill would walk to the bakery and bring home a couple of doughnuts. We would sit, just the two of us, and have our bakery and talk."

When he was in college, he told his parents he was gay.

"It was a real shock to us. We all had a hard time, especially Bill."

He was diagnosed HIV-positive in 1987, and Fall was worried about more than the disease.

"I knew that his medicine would cost $1,000 a month and I didn't know what we would do. That's when I found S-CAP, and began volunteering.

"I knew I could share what I had learned about AIDS. And, even though it's not just a gay disease, I knew there were many families out there who had to deal with their children's homosexuality as well as their having AIDS. I thought I could help."

And she has helped, with the moms group and regular potluck meals at S-CAP; delivering meals and helping with transportation, loyally attending Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meetings, and being one of the prison moms.

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Glen Smith

FOREIGN POLICY

CIA works to gather economic intelligence

Spies played role in trade talks

New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — During the Clinton administration's tense negotiations with Japan last spring — with the threat of sanctions to cut off Japanese luxury car imports to the United States looming — U.S. trade officials were accompanied everywhere by a small team of intelligence officers.

Each morning, they gave U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and his aides inside information gathered by the CIA's Tokyo station and the electronic-eavesdropping equipment of the National Security Agency, sifted by CIA analysts in Washington.

Kantor received descriptions of conversations among Japanese bureaucrats and auto executives from Toyota and Nissan who were pressing for a settlement, and read about the competing pressures on Japanese Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto.

When the negotiations came to a climax in Geneva, the intelligence team was in place at the Intercontinental Hotel, working alongside Kantor's negotiators, offering assessments of how far the Japanese side could be pressed.

"It was a remarkable performance, because the intelligence agencies finally realized this was the World Series — the arms control talks of the new age," said one senior administration official.

"But in the end, did it help much? Beyond some valuable detail we could not have gotten elsewhere, did it tell us much about which way Hashimoto would go? It would be hard to make that case."

Spying on allies for economic advantage is a crucial new assignment for the CIA now that U.S. foreign policy is focused on commercial interests abroad.

President Clinton made gathering economic intelligence a high priority of his administration, specifically information to protect and defend U.S. competitiveness, technology and financial security in a world where an economic crisis can spread across global markets in minutes.

But the transition is a rough one for an agency far less comfortable with capital flows than with communist foes. At the Treasury Department, the U.S. Trade Representative's Office and the Commerce Department, officials say they now receive a torrent of information from the CIA.

But in the next breath, they add that the quantity is not matched by the quality. The agency, they complain, often cannot separate the vital from the trivial, and its analysis of economic data is still amateurish.

Recently some in the administration have begun to wonder aloud whether much of the analysis should be farmed out elsewhere to better-trained experts in government and the private sector.

Allan Goodman, a former CIA official and academic dean of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, doubts the CIA can become proficient at economic spying because the agency doesn't have the specific brain power needed to process and analyze the information.

But some U.S. companies — which must compete globally with international firms that often resort to bribery to win large contracts — want the CIA to get involved in identifying such behind-the-scenes machinations.

"If we're willing to do dirty tricks for the defense part of national security, then why aren't we able to do dirty tricks for the economic part?" asks Robert Kohler, a retired CIA official and general manager of TRW Avionics & Surveillance Group.

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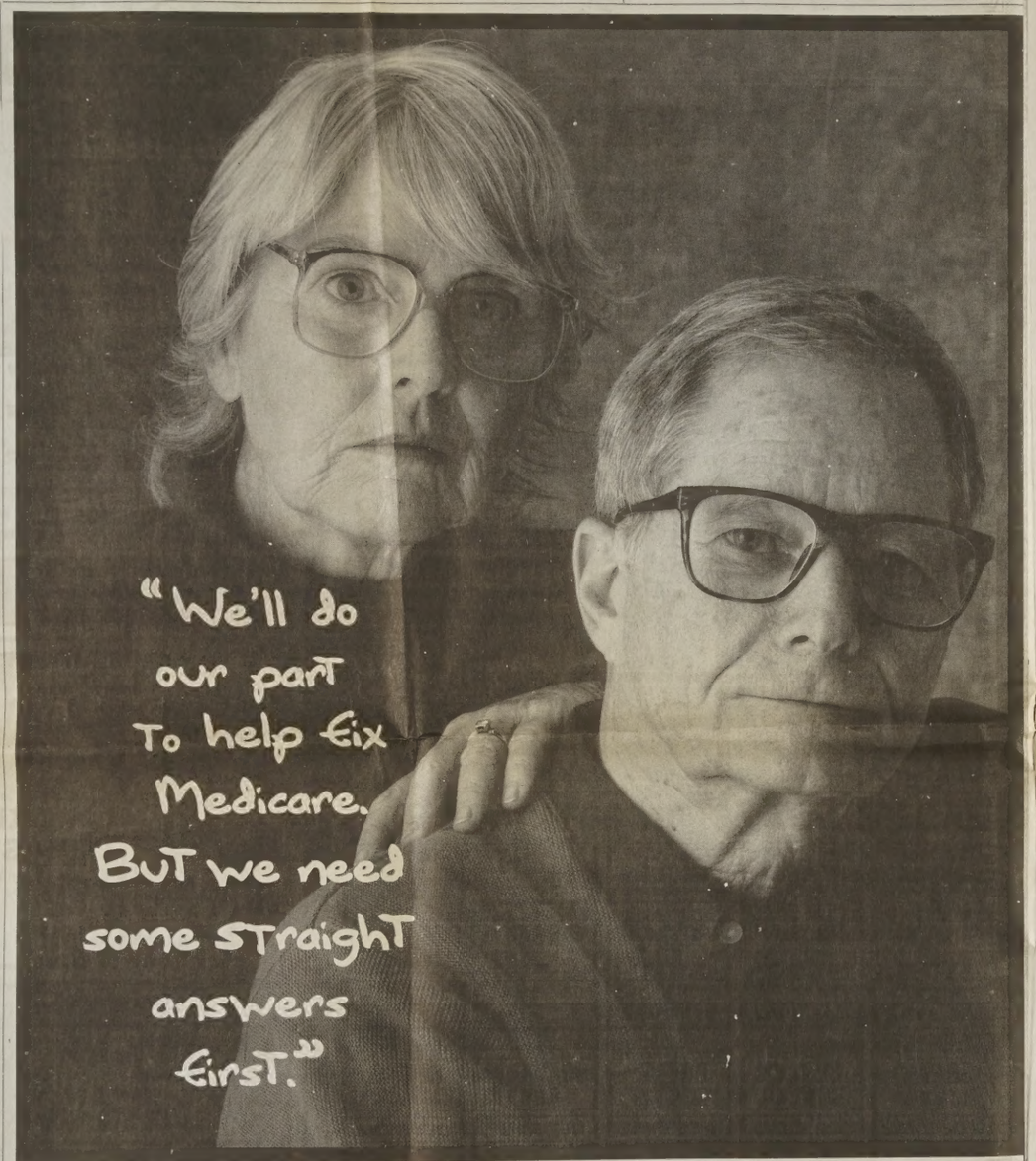

Right now, the Senate is racing to pass the largest cuts in Medicare history. Cuts that would double what you pay for premiums and deductibles in just seven years.

We know that changes are needed to guarantee Medicare's future. But before these cuts are rushed through Congress, and before we agree to anything, we want to know how this will affect us.

- How can we be sure our family doctors will still see us if Congress cuts their payments?
- What will happen to the quality of our health care?
- What will we do if our hospital is forced to close?
- Why are we being pressured into joining an HMO?
- What will younger people do if they can't get Medicare until they're 67?
- What will happen if we can't afford the higher costs they want us to pay?

We want to fix Medicare so it will be there for our children and grandchildren. But we also expect some straight answers before Congress votes. Because the plan being proposed now would do too much too fast.

Your voice counts. Call your Senators today.
Senator Campbell (202)-224-5852
Senator Brown (202)-224-5941

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Barton E. Knox, MD

NATION

Vandalism at FAA site investigated

Note cites raid on Branch Davidians

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A small bomb damaged an unmanned weather station used by air traffic controllers, and a note bearing a swastika claimed the blast was in retaliation for the 1993 raid on the Branch Davidians, authorities said.

"There was no threat to aviation safety at any time," Anthony Willett, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman, said Saturday.

The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, which investigated the World Trade Center bombing, joined the investigation into Friday's explosion.

Police said at a news conference that they were giving the investigation added emphasis because of the note and because the vandalism occurred as the United Nations is about to observe its 50th anniversary.

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Associated Press

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FOREIGN POLICY

CIA works to gather economic intelligence

Spies played role in trade talks

New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — During the Clinton administration's tense negotiations with Japan last spring — with the threat of sanctions to cut off Japanese luxury car imports to the United States looming — U.S. trade officials were accompanied everywhere by a small team of intelligence officers.

Each morning, they gave U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and his aides inside information gathered by the CIA's Tokyo station and the electronic eavesdropping equipment of the National Security Agency, sifted by CIA analysts in Washington.

Kantor received descriptions of conversations among Japanese bureaucrats and auto executives from Toyota and Nissan who were pressing for a settlement, and read about the competing pressures on Japanese Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto.

When the negotiations came to a climax in Geneva, the intelligence team was in place at the Intercontinental Hotel, working alongside Kantor's negotiators, offering assessments of how far the Japanese side could be pressed.

"It was a remarkable performance, because the intelligence agencies finally realized this was the World Series — the arms control talks of the new age," said one senior administration official.

"But in the end, did it help much? Beyond some valuable detail we could not have gotten elsewhere, did it tell us much about which way Hashimoto would go? It would be hard to make that case."

Spying on allies for economic advantage is a crucial new assignment for the CIA now that U.S. foreign policy is focused on commercial interests abroad.

President Clinton made gathering economic intelligence a high priority of his administration, specifically information to protect and defend U.S. competitiveness, technology and financial security in a world where an economic crisis can spread across global markets in minutes.

But the transition is a rough one for an agency far less comfortable with capital flows than with communist foes. At the Treasury Department, the U.S. Trade Representative's Office and the Commerce Department, officials say they now receive a torrent of information from the CIA.

But in the next breath, they add that the quantity is not matched by the quality. The agency, they complain, often cannot separate the vital from the trivial, and its analysis of economic data is still amateurish.

Recently some in the administration have begun to wonder aloud whether much of the analysis should be farmed out elsewhere to better-trained experts in government and the private sector.

Allan Goodman, a former CIA official and academic dean of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, doubts the CIA can become proficient at economic spying because the agency doesn't have the specific brain power needed to process and analyze the information.

But some U.S. companies — which must compete globally with international firms that often resort to bribery to win large contracts — want the CIA to get involved in identifying such behind-the-scenes machinations.

"If we're willing to do dirty tricks for the defense part of national security, then why aren't we able to do dirty tricks for the economic part?" asks Robert Kohler, a retired CIA official and general manager of TRW Avionics & Surveillance Group.

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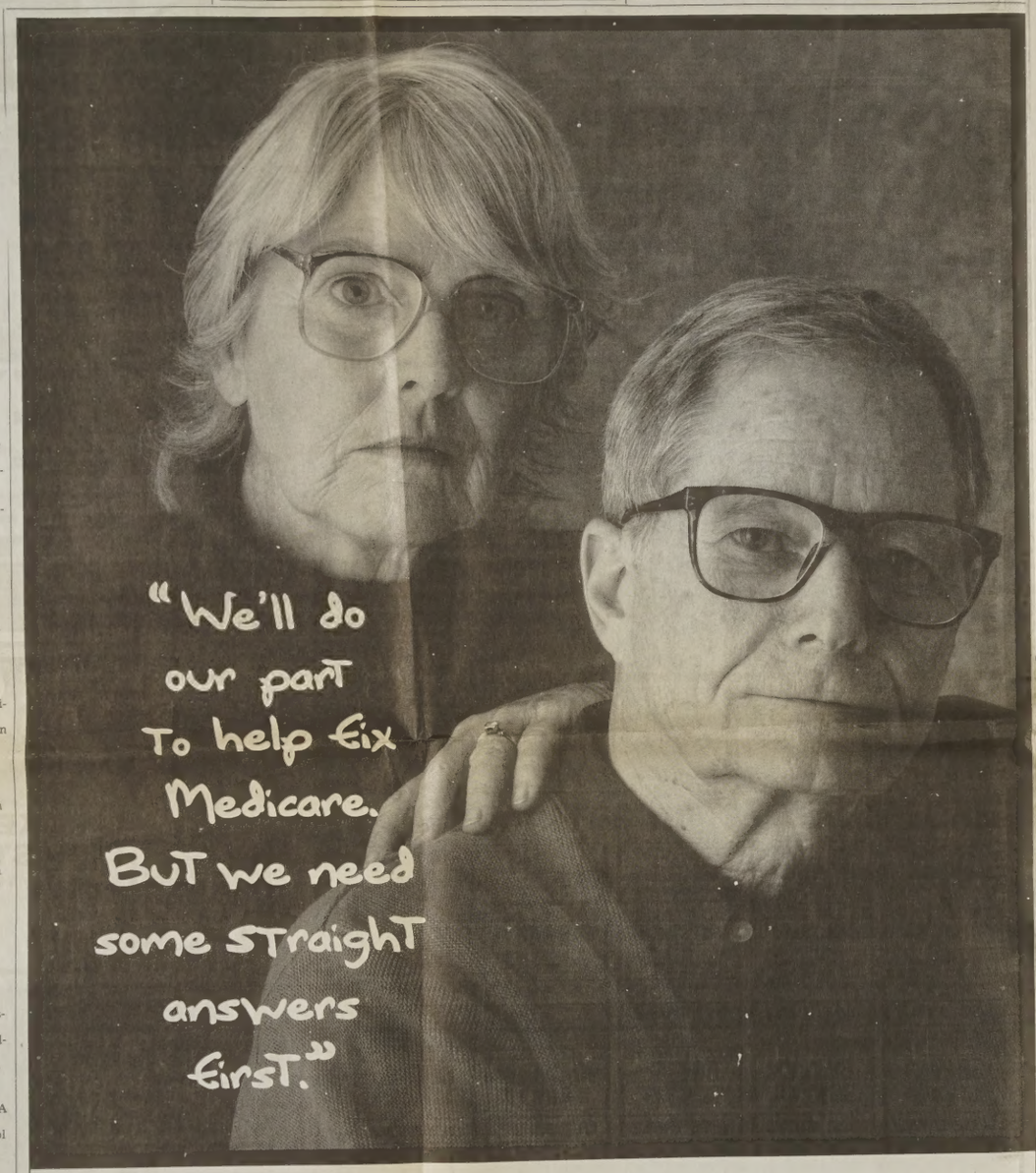

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- What will happen to the quality of our health care?
- What will we do if our hospital is forced to close?
- Why are we being pressured into joining an HMO?
- What will younger people do if they can't get Medicare until they're 67?
- What will happen if we can't afford the higher costs they want us to pay?

We want to fix Medicare so it will be there for our children and grandchildren. But we also expect some straight answers before Congress votes. Because the plan being proposed now would do too much too fast.

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NATION

Vandalism at FAA site investigated

Note cites raid on Branch Davidians

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A small bomb damaged an unmanned weather station used by air traffic controllers, and a note bearing a swastika claimed the blast was in retaliation for the 1993 raid on the Branch Davidians, authorities said.

"There was no threat to aviation safety at any time," Anthony Willett, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman, said Saturday.

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